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ABSTRACT

The Improving Vocational Guidance and Counseling through Career Awareness, Orientation and Exploration summer program was developed to provide a 3-week career awareness and exploration program for teacher-recommended disadvantaged minority middle school students from the Richmond Public Schools in Virginia. A total of 18 African, African-American, and Asian students eventually completed the program. During the three-week program, 11 minority group members from the public, private, and education sectors addressed the group and thus provided it with a range of minority role models from such areas as educational administration, the insurance industry, state government, the teaching profession, the computer industry, and the airline industry. The students took field trips to Richmond Community Hospital and Virginia State University. Another highlight was the extern program, through which each student was given a one-day extern placement in a business or agency matching his or her chosen career field of interest. The program has received high evaluations from its participating students, visiting lecturers, program teachers, and some members of the community at large. (MN)

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PROGRAM EVALUATION

of the

IMPROVING VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING THROUGH CAREER AWARENESS, ORIENTATION AND EXPLORATION (SUMMER PROGRAM)

for the

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING
RICHMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23219

directed by

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PROGRAM PERIOD
July 27 - August 14, 1987

DR. WILLIAM M. HARRIS
CONSULTANT AND EVALUATOR

CE 049 165

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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William M. Harris

This report provides an assessment of the Improving Vocational Guidance and Counseling Through Career Awareness, orientation and Exploration (Summer Program) program. The program was variously referred to as the Career Education Program, Discovering You, and the Summer Career Program. For purposes of this report the short title Career Education Program (CEP) will be employed.

INTRODUCTION

This nation and the world community of countries are rapidly moving toward a high technology, information driven workplace. Workers will need new skills and attitudes to accommodate the challenges of this new system. No place is this demand for proper attitudes and competitive skills more needed than in the youth of inner-city America. Confronted by racism, sexism, and institutional failure, African American and other minority youth are especially an appropriate target for education and training programs designed to prepare workers for the hi-tech future of the 21st Century. Vocational education programs offer promise to positively contributing to this area of critical need. CEP was proposed as an early intervention in the preparation of inner-city Richmond minority youth toward the future world of work.

PURPOSE

CEP has six (6) basic objectives. These objectives were designed to give direction to the program and guide the activities of instruction and practice. The objectives were:

1. To provide a 3-week program for at least 21 teacher recommended disadvantaged minority middle school students from Richmond Public Schools.

2. To develop a Cultural Index Scale to indicate the limited opportunity for the targeted youth of career/vocational awareness.

3. To involve a minimum of ten (10) successful minority vocational professionals from the Greater Richmond area

to serve as role models and resource specialists in the project.

4. To insure that at least 75% of the participants report greater awareness of careers available and the requirements necessary to achieve entry to a range of careers.

5. To insure that at least 90% of the participants indicate a better understanding of job requirements and personal preparation necessary for successful career development after a week's exposure to the curriculum.

6. To provide at least five sites for field trips of work locations so that participants will acquire increased knowledge about the world of work having had an exposure to the exploration curriculum.

The objectives are clear and measurable. The remainder of this assessment is based upon these articulated objectives.

STAFFING

CEP staff consisted of experienced members of the Richmond Public Schools faculty and administration. Ms. Louise L. Bassett, program director, teaches career and business education at the Elkhardt Middle School. She was responsible for administering program activities, teaching classes, and managing staff. Ms. Betty Moon, home ecology teacher at John Marshall High School, assisted the director. She worked to schedule activities and assist students in extra-classroom events. Mr. Carlton C. Stevens is an assistant principal at John Marshall High School and served to advise the director on matters related to student management and program curriculum content. The consultant provided technical support to the program and conducted the evaluation. The consultant is Dr. William M. Harris, Professor of City Planning in the School of Architecture and Director of the Center for Housing and the Social Environment at the University of Virginia.

LOCATION AND DURATION

The CEP project was located at the George Wythe High School. An air-conditioned classroom was provided and some access to administrative offices for faculty. The classroom contained excellent equipment facilities including computers, typewriters, and audio-visual apparatus. Equally important was the outstanding support and encouragement received from building principal Mr. David O. Williams.

The program period was three (3) weeks beginning July 27, 1987. Classes and activities were held Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. The schedule below shows the activities for the program which ended August 14, 1987.

July 27:	Class Instruction
July 28:	Class Instruction and Visiting Lecturer
July 29:	Class Instruction and Visiting Lecturer
July 30:	Field Trip
August 3:	Class Instruction and Visiting Lecturer
August 4:	Class Instruction and Visiting Lecturer
August 5:	Class Instruction and Visiting Lecturer
August 6:	Field Trip
August 10:	Class Instruction and Visiting Lecturer
August 11:	Class Instruction and Visiting Lecturer
August 12:	Extern Program Placements
August 13:	Picnic and Awards Day

PERSONS SERVED

The students participating in CEP were entering or enrolled or immediately leaving the middle school. The roster below shows the students names, school attended, and self-reported area of career interest. The students were African, African American and Asian in race with an excellent gender balance.

Name	School	Interest Career
Akinwande, Victor	Elkhardt	Attorney
Anderson, Stephanie	Elkhardt	Fashion Designer
Ashe, Derrick	Elkhardt	Computer Services Technician
Brown, Thomas	Elkhardt	Accountant
Carey, Michael	Elkhardt	Auto Mechanic
Cheatham, Lamont	Elkhardt	Medical Doctor
Davis, Sherrie	Reid Elem.	Judge
Eberhardt, Felicia	Elkhardt	Computer Programmer
Jones, Jewel	Elkhardt	Teacher
Morton, Thomas	Elkhardt	Chemical Engineer
Noel, Denise	Reid Elem.	Judge
Pok, Sambo	Elkhardt	Medical Doctor
Pok, Vannak	Elkhardt	Teacher
Richardson, Racquel	Boushall	Hair Stylist
Robinson, Shaurie	Elkhardt	Computer Programmer
Shelton, Sheryl	Thompson	Secretary
Tinsley, Mica	Henderson	Attorney
Thomas, Latina	Elkhardt	Nurse

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Each program activity is assessed against the explicit objective of the CEP. The format allows statement of the objective followed by the evaluative comments testing the goal.

> To provide a 3-week program for at least 21 teacher recommended disadvantaged minority middle school students from Richmond Public Schools.

CEP operated beginning July 27 through August 14, 1987, inclusively. The program held classes four days per week, Monday through Thursday. The schedule coincided with the weekly days of the summer session of Richmond Public Schools. Classes met starting at 8:30 a.m. and ended 12:30 p.m.

Twenty-four (24) students registered for CEP. Three registrars failed to show for class. Three others terminated voluntarily after a few class attendances. Eighteen (18) students, ages 12 to 16, finally participated and completed the program.

The program intent was to have middle school teachers recommend students for participation in the program. In fact due to late notice of program approval, the director was unable to give sufficient notice for all sending schools to formally recommend students. The director was resourceful in telephone communication to obtain adequate enrollment. In years to come it will be necessary to begin this process of requesting sending schools by March or April prior to school closing in June. The disproportionate number of Elkhardt students, home school of the director, is reflected in an effort to fill enrollment goals at a later than desired date. Similarly, it could not be determined for selection purposes the socioeconomic status of participants. However, as a correlation of actual enrollments in Richmond Public Schools, it may safely be assumed that a very substantial percentage of the participants were low socioeconomic status youth.

> To develop a Cultural Index Scale to indicate the limited opportunity for the targeted youth of career/vocational awareness.

The intent of the objective was to determine the employment status and job type of adults in the homes of student participants. The instrument was not administered. Again the reason owes primarily to the very short lead time available for startup of the program. In the future this instrument may be given each student recommended by sender schools to be completed as a condition for final selection consideration.

> To involve a minimum of ten (10) successful minority vocational professionals from the Greater Richmond area to serve as role models and resource specialists in the project.

CEP was designed to positively exploit the professional talent of African American scholars, businessmen, and service professionals. The intent of the objective was to involve a variety of such persons, men and women, as successful role models for the young students. The expectation was that positive role models serve to motivate minority youths to seek lofty career goals.

The impressive array of visiting lecturers is shown below in the table. Each lectured and interacted with the students in discussion and/or "hands on" projects.

Date	Visiting Lecturer
July 28	Mrs. E. Carter-Dabney, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College
July 29	Mrs. Emma Mallory, Virginia Employment Commission
August 3	Mr. Olden Johnson, Federal Aviation Administration
	Mr. Bill Wilkerson, Piedmont Airlines Pilot
August 4	Mr. Rudy Spruill, Mutual of Omaha
August 5	Mr. R. Callahan, Richmond City Fire Department
August 10	Mr. Daryl Felder, Phillip Morris Computing
	Dr. William M. Harris, University of Virginia
	Ms. Selena Cuffee, Richmond Planning Department
August 11	Mrs. Macia Woody, Consolidated Bank and Trust Co.
	Mr. James Hinnat, Richmond Public Schools Technology Teacher

While not an explicit objective, each visiting lecturer was requested to assess the program in light of his visit. Overwhelmingly the reported assessments were positive. A summary of the professional role model's comments include:

- The program is very productive. I trust it will be a continuous part of your summer programming activities for 1988.

- The students were excited and involved; they asked interesting questions.

- It is a very worthwhile program that awakens the students to the value of education and also gives them a chance to be in a chosen business environment.

- I would like to thank Ms. Bassett for the invitation extended and would love to participate in future activities.

To ensure that at least 75% of the participants report greater awareness of careers available and the requirements necessary to achieve entry to a range of careers.

Perhaps the best test of any program is the assessment reported by the participants. Especially noteworthy in this regard is the fact that every student, 100%, rate the program a maximum positive score. This rating was received from the students to the following items:

- I feel the program has been useful to me.

- I learned important things from the books, filmstrips, guest speakers, computer program, etc.

- I enjoyed the way the teacher conducted the class.

- The visitors to the classes helped me decide that I wanted to be a(an) (name of career) .

- After visiting the places where Black people and other minorities work, I now feel good about a future career.

- I know a lot more about many careers and qualifications for jobs after taking the class.

- I enjoyed the class and plan to tell my friends about it.

Similarly they reported their classmates as "nice, friendly, and helpful."

> To insure that at least 90% of the participants indicate a better understanding of job requirements and personal preparation necessary for successful career development after a week's exposure to the curriculum.

While no evaluation was conducted after the first week of classes, the assessment immediately preceding clearly shows the perceived value the students received from CEP. This objective in fact may not have been appropriate. The initial week of classes is characterized by a degree of flux and adjustment. This is especially the case for short term programs.

> To provide at least five sites for field trips of work locations so that the participants will acquire increased knowledge about the world of work having had an exposure to the exploration curriculum.

This objective was greatly exceeded by one of the program's more exciting features. All students reported complete satisfaction with the two field trips. These visitations were made to Virginia State University where the participants were explained the importance and methods of setting college career goals. Those students identifying careers not requiring college education reported satisfaction with this visit. Also very impressive to the participants was the field trip to the Richmond Community Hospital. Non-medical oriented students joined their classmates in rating the experience very positive. Especially were the participants excited about the lectures related to diseases and medical research.

Another highlight of CEP was the Extern Program. An extern program places students in an actual work environment for a short period of time to experience the role of professionals. Each student had a placement, one student did not show. The placements were for one day, August 13, and located at the following businesses or agencies matching the student's chosen career field of interest.

Name	Career	Placement
Akinwande, Victor	Lawyer	Hill, Tucker, Marsh
Ashe, Derrick	Computer Service Technician	Xerox Corporation
Carey, Michael	Auto Mechanic	Moore's Auto
Brown, Thomas	Accountant	Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority
Cheatham, Lamont	Doctor	Richmond Community Hospital
Eberhardt, Felicia	Computer Programmer	Phillip Morris
Anderson, Stephanie	Fashion Designer	Designs for You
Jones, Jewel	Teacher	Maymont Elementary School
Richardson, Raquel	Hair Stylist	Flair Beauty School
Shelton, Cheryl	Secretary	Richmond Public Schools
Noel, Denise	Judge	Judge M. R. Hughes
Tinsley, Mica	Lawyer	Atty. Bessida White
Thomas, Latina	Nurse	Richmond Community Hospital
Robinson, Shaurie	Computer Programmer	Philip Morris
Davis, Sherrie	Judge	Judge M. R. Harris

Following the extern experience each student was requested to assess the visit. The following comments summarized the outstanding benefits received:

- I am sure I want to be a(an) ___(name of career)___.
- I learned ___(name of career)___ will take hard work.
- I got a lot of learning.
- The experience helped me look at career choices.

Finally, both CEP and the Extern Program received broad recognition in the Richmond Times-Dispatch newspaper on August 16. That news clipping is attached. To date the responses from school district administrators, teachers, parents, and other students to the newspaper article have been most positive and encouraging.

SUMMARY

The 1987 summer Career Education Program was an unqualified success. The reality is supported by assessments from participating students, visiting lecturers, program teachers, and some members of the public community. The success of CEP encourages continuation in subsequent summers. Some modification to notice date of award would enhance startup procedures. The program has clearly proven a positive credit to the vocational education community and public education in general.

Pupils get firsthand look at careers

By Monte R. Young
Times-Dispatch staff writer

Staff photo by Don Long

Richmond lawyer Bessida White works with Mika Tinsley

Thomas Morton recalled the time he was playing in a friend's back yard when they ran across some chemicals and decided to mix them together just to see what would happen.

Fortunately, mixing them did not cause anyone injury. But he said he walked away from the experience fascinated with the idea of putting chemicals together.

The idea that such an interest might one day become a way of making a living had not set in with Thomas. But it did after he participated recently in a program designed to give pupils a chance to explore careers.

"We were just playing around and mixed some sulfur and mothballs in a test tube to see what would happen," he said of the earlier experience.

"But when I started this program, I didn't know what I wanted to be. I knew I liked to deal with chemicals, and now I'm considering it as a possible career in chemical engineering," Thomas, 14, said.

The eighth-grader at Thompson Middle School got a firsthand look at what it would take to reach that goal when he spent part of a day with Bernadette Woodhouse of Philip Morris.

Ms. Woodhouse gave him some ideas on the types of courses he will need to take in high school to prepare for acceptance to a college program that teaches chemical engineering, he said.

At Philip Morris, he was able to meet with chemical engineers, as well as electrical and mechanical engineers, "to see if I was interested in those fields. But I think I'll stick with chemical engineering," he said.

"When I started in this program I didn't think that in middle school I needed to know what I wanted to be. But I learned that it is not too soon to start considering what kind of a job I want," he said.

Louise L. Bassett, director of "Discovering You," said Thomas was one of 20 pupils who participated in the program.

The three-week program, at George Wythe High School, focused on self-awareness, career awareness and career exploration.

Based on their interest, pupils were given the opportunity for on-the-job experience by spending a day with a Richmond business.

They were placed according to their interest in computer technology, medical sciences, law, commercial aviation, secretarial science, auto mechanics, accounting and other fields.

The children were middle-school pupils in grades six through nine, said Ms. Bassett, who is a teacher in the Richmond schools.

"Discovering You" is a pilot program receiving funds from the state Department of Education and Richmond schools.

"At the middle-school level, it is crucial to get to them early and set up goals to give them something to reach for," she said. "Many do not make it to high school and we want to get to them before they give up.

"We want them to find an occupation to work toward. Often there is not anything to spark their interest. This program gives them a chance to find an occupation they are interested in and learn what it takes to make it," Ms. Bassett said.

"I feel the students set realistic goals. We are planning a follow-up program for next year to see where they are."

While Thomas may not have known what he wanted to do, that was not the case for Mika Tinsley, 13, an eighth-grader at Henderson Middle School.

"I wanted to be a lawyer and this program helped me make sure whether I wanted to be one or not," Mika said. "My mom said she felt I would be a good lawyer because of the way I defend myself with her. I don't let matters rest until it is resolved."

Mika had the chance to spend time with Bessida White, a Richmond lawyer.

"I saw how she worked with her clients and how she got along with them. I also saw the amount of paper work involved," Mika said, smiling.

Still, she said she is leaving the program with "confidence and that if I want to be a lawyer, I've got to work hard and make good grades."